
Editorial

Unifying Palestinian National Council

Palestinians, patriotic Arabs and progressives from all over the world celebrated the convening of the Palestinian National Council's session of national unity and steadfastness, held in Algiers, April 20-26th, which resulted in reunifying the PLO on a patriotic basis.

It was well-known to Palestinians that the main reason for the disruption of the PLO's unity was the right wing's policy which was manifest in the following: (1) establishing strong, official relations with the Egyptian regime and succumbing to its pressure which aimed to transform the PLO from a revolutionary body into reactionary one; (2) signing the Amman accord with King Hussein, giving the Jordanian regime the right to share the PLO's representation of the Palestinian people; (3) showing signs of readiness to recognize security Council resolutions 242 and 338 which deal with the Palestinian cause as a question of refugees, that could be solved by resettlement or some kind of charity; and (4) trying to impose the political line of one group (Fatah) on the PLO as a whole by dominating all its institutions.

These moves by the rightists led to disrupting Palestinian national unity and the unity of the PLO, a situation which was further aggravated by the convention of an illegal session of the PNC in Amman in 1984.

IMPETUS TOWARDS UNITY

Since that time, a series of developments have occurred, presenting the possibility of restoring the PLO's unity on a nationalist basis. Chief among the factors pushing for renewed Palestinian unity were the ceaseless efforts of imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction to impose their conditions on the PLO's rightist leadership without giving anything in return. This was a main factor forcing the right wing to reconsider its policy, rather than risk losing the support of the Palestinian masses altogether.

Another main factor mitigating for Palestinian unity was the dangerous situation facing the Palestinian camps and revolution in Lebanon. This portended serious damage to the Palestinian people and their struggle if the PLO did not unite on a nationalist basis to face the situation.

A third factor pushing for renewed Palestinian unity was the efforts made in good faith by progressive Palestinian forces, on the political and mass levels, to reunite the PLO and restore its national program.

A fourth significant factor was the great efforts exerted by the Palestinian revolution's Arab and international allies, especially Algeria, Libya, Democratic Yemen and the Soviet Union.

The combination of these factors led to a meeting of six Palestinian organizations in Tripoli, Libya, to discuss Palesti-

nian national unity and the reunification of the PLO. This meeting resulted in a document to be put to discussion in the Palestinian national dialogue which began in Algeria on April 13th and culminated in the convening of the PNC on April 20th.

RESTORING THE NATIONAL PROGRAM

Great efforts were expended by those participating in the national dialogue to enable the holding of the PNC. Equally great efforts had to be made at the PNC session itself to maintain this agreement. In both instances, the most controversial issue was the PLO's relations with the Egyptian regime. The problem was not limited to the right-wing forces who wanted to maintain these relations. Arab reaction, via the Egyptian regime, staged a blatant attempt to interfere in the PNC's decision-making. The Egyptian regime applied pressure and threatened retaliatory measures against the Palestinian people if the PLO were to sever relations with it.

However, thanks to persistent efforts by the Palestinian progressive organizations in particular, all these pressures came to naught. The PLO adopted a political program which stipulates keeping good relations with the Egyptian nationalist forces while severing relations with the regime as long as it adheres to the Camp David accords.

The PNC also stressed rejection of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, because they don't deal with the Palestinian question as a political cause of a people who want to return to their homeland and establish their own independent state.

Concerning organizational matters, the PNC decided that a collective leadership should be elected from among the members of the Executive Committee, to serve as the PLO's daily leadership. It was also decided that the Executive Committee will reconsider the structure and personnel of PLO offices in all countries.

To these achievements should be added the public and official cancellation of the Amman accord before the convening of the PNC session. Moreover, clear decisions were taken stressing the PLO's will to improve relations with Syria.

The political and organizational programs adopted at this session of the PNC have restored the PLO's nationalist line. At the same time, Palestinian unity has been restored since all the major organizations of the Palestinian revolution were participants in the PNC. All Palestinian nationalists and progressives should support the PLO in implementing its newly adopted decisions. At the same time, those organizations who boycotted the PNC session should join in and play a more active, constructive role in the Palestinian struggle led by a unified PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. ●